

Robinson's MAGAZINE:

A REPOSITORY OF ORIGINAL PAPERS, & SELECTIONS FROM
ENGLISH MAGAZINES.

Published every Saturday Morning, at Robinson's Circulating Library, No. 94, Baltimore-street.

AT FOUR DOLLARS A YEAR.

VOL. II.]

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1819.

[No. 38.]

ACCOUNT OF THE PERSIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE IN ENGLAND. (FROM MORIER'S JOURNEY THROUGH PERSIA.)

[As the Persian Ambassador attracted much interest in England, it may be gratifying to his friends, and not unacceptable to others, to receive some account of his residence in that country.]

HIS first surprise on reaching England, was at the caravanserais, for so, though no contrast can be greater, he called our hotels. We were lodged in a gay apartment at Plymouth, richly ornamented with looking-glasses, which are so esteemed in Persia, that they are held to be fitting for royal apartments only: and our dinners were served up with such quantities of plate, and of glass-ware, as brought forth repeated expressions of surprise every time he was told that they were the common appendages of our caravanseries. The good folks of the inn, who like most people in England, look upon it as a matter of course that nothing can be too hot for Asiatics, so loaded the Ambassador's bed with warm covering, that he had scarcely been in bed an hour, before he was obliged to get out of it: for having during all his life slept on nothing but a mattress on the bare ground, he found the heat insupportable, and in this state he walked about the greatest part of the night, with all the people of the

inn following him in procession, and unable to divine what could be his wishes.

One of the publick coaches was hired to convey his servants to London; and when four of them had got inside, having seated themselves cross-legged, they would not allow that there could be room for more, although the coach was calculated to take six. They armed themselves from head to foot with pistols, swords, and each a musket in his hand, as if they were about to make a journey in their own country; and thus encumbered notwithstanding every assurance that nothing could happen to them, they got into the coach. His Excellency himself greatly enjoyed the novelty of a carriage, and was delighted at the speed with which we travelled, particularly at night, when he perceived no diminution of it, although he was surprised that all this was done without a guide. We were met at two posts from London by two gentlemen of the Foreign Office, who greeted him on his arrival; but he grew very anxious as we proceeded, and seemed to be looking out for an *Istakball*, or a deputation headed by some man of distinction, which after the manner

of his own country, he expected would be sent to meet him. In vain we assured him that no disrespect was intended, and that our modes of doing honour to Ambassadors were different from those of Persia: our excuses seemed only to grieve him the more; and although to a foreigner the interest of the road greatly increased as we approached the city, yet he requested to have both the glasses of the carriage drawn up, for he said that he did not understand the nature of such an entry, which appeared to him more like smuggling a bale of goods into a town, than the reception of a publick envoy. As for three of his servants who followed us in a chaise behind, they had nearly suffocated themselves; for, by way of experiment, they had put up all the glasses, and then when they wished it could not put them down, so that they were quite exhausted for want of fresh air.

He who had witnessed the manner in which our ambassadors had been received in Persia, particularly the *levée en masse* of the inhabitants who were sent out to meet him at every place where he stopt, was surprised to see the little notice that he himself in the same situation in England had attracted, and the total independence of all ranks of people.

Although he found a fine house and a splendid establishment, ready to receive him in London, and although a fine collation was laid out upon the morning of his arrival, nothing could revive his spirits; so much had he been disappointed at the mode of his reception.

His first object was to deliver his credentials to the King as soon as possible, because in Persia it is esteemed a slight if that ceremony be delayed. In this also he was disappointed; for, on the first Wednesday, the usual levee day, His Majesty happened to be unwell, and

consequently there was a delay of more than ten days before he could be presented. He bitterly lamented his fate, and daily affirmed, that for this he should lose his head on his return to Persia. When the day came, he was naturally anxious about the reception which he was to find: he had formed his ideas of our court from what he recollected of his own, where the King's person is held so sacred, that few have the privilege of approaching it. He had a private audience at the Queen's House, and from the manner in which he expressed himself after it was over, it appeared that the respect which he had hitherto felt towards our monarch was diminished. There are many ceremonies exacted upon approaching the Shah of Persia. He is first seen at a great distance, he is approached with great caution, and with many profound inclinations of the body. In his immediate vicinity, the shoes are taken off, and none enter the room in which he himself is seated, without a special command from him. Here the Persian entered at once into the same room where His Majesty was standing. He made no inclination of the body, he did not even take his shoes off; and what is more, he put his credentials into His Majesty's own hands. He said, that he had expected to have seen our King seated on a throne at a distance, and that he could not have approached within many paces of him: his surprise then may be conceived, when, on entering a small room, he was taken to a person whom he took to be a *capijoe* or porter, and was informed, that this was the king of England. He said, that if any blame was imputed to him for not having delivered his credentials immediately on arrival, that all would be pardoned him, when he should assure the Shah, that he was not desired to take off his shoes as he approach-

ed our monarch. These circumstances will perhaps show, of what importance it is, upon the introduction of an Oriental Minister to the King, that care should be taken to show him the court in its greatest splendour.

He arrived in London in the month of November, and the gloom of the weather had a visible effect upon his health and spirits. For two months he never saw the sun, and it was fully believed by his suite, that they had got into regions beyond its influence; when one day several of them rushed in to him with great joy to announce that they had just seen it, and that if he made haste he might perhaps see it also.

It was surprising to observe with what ease he acquired our habits of life, how soon he used himself to our furniture, our modes of eating, our hours, our forms and ceremonies, and even our language, though perhaps, with respect to the latter acquirement, it might rather be observed, that he soon learnt sufficient just to misunderstand everything that was said. He who had sat upon his heels on the ground all his life, here was quite at his ease on chairs and sofas; he who before never eat but with his fingers, now used knives and forks without inconvenience.

Of some things, it would be impossible from mere description to give any just idea. Such was an opera or a play to a Persian. The first night he went to the opera, evidently the impression of surprise, which he received on entering his box, was very strong, although his pride made him conceal it. His servants had been sent to the gallery, and upon going up to hear what was their conversation, they were found wrangling amongst themselves, whether or no the figures that they saw upon the stage were real men and women, or automaton.

He was taken to see King Lear, and the story, which is likely to affect one whose natural respect for majesty is so profound, brought tears from him in great plenty, although he did not understand the language in which it was acted. No people would have a greater taste for scenick representations than the Persians, if we may judge from the effects which they produced on these individuals.

When it is known that a Persian *majlis*, or assembly is composed of people seated in a formal row on the ground, with their backs against the walls, some idea may be had of the Persian Ambassador's surprise upon entering an English rout. The perfect ease of his manners, and unembarrassed conduct on such occasions, will be as surprising to us, as the great crowd of men and women hotly pressed together for no one apparent purpose, was to him. He gave an entertainment of a similar description at his own house, to the astonishment of his domesticks, whose greatest surprise was how little noise was made by such a crowd, for said they, "what a different scene would such a number of people have made of it in Persia!"

On his being taken to hear a debate at the House of Commons, he immediately sided with a young orator, who gained him over by his earnest manner and the vehemence of his action; and at the House of Lords, the great object of his remark was the Lord Chancellor, whose enormous wig, which he compared to a sheep-skin, awoke all his curiosity. There was considerable pleasure in observing his emotion when he was taken to St. Paul's Cathedral, on the anniversary of the Charity Children, where he acquired more real esteem for the institutions and the national character of England than he did from any other sight, for he frequently after referred to his feelings on that occasion.

He was one day waited upon by a deputation from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, composed of three Reverend Gentlemen, who in their robes presented him with a Bible and Prayer-book superbly bound, and addressed him with a speech written on parchment. As they spoke the address he was requested to stand up, which he willingly did; but when they had departed, his servants were all unanimous that he had been made an *Isauvi*, that is, a Christian.

He frequently walked in Kensington Gardens by himself. As he was one day seated on a bench, an old gentleman and an old lady, taking him for one of his own attendants, accosted him. They asked him many questions:—How does your master like this, and how does

he like that? and so on.—Tired with being questioned, he said, "He like all very well; but one thing he not like—old man ask too many questions." Upon this he got up laughing, leaving the old gentleman to find out that he had been speaking to the Ambassador in person.

If the whole history of his residence in England were worth the narrative, it is evident that this note might be greatly lengthened; but perhaps, that which would afford the most amusement, would be the publication of his own journal, which he regularly kept, during his absence from Persia; and which on his return there, was read with great avidity by his own countrymen.

JOSEPH LANCASTER.

From the Monthly Magazine, for Nov. 1818.

To the Editor of the Monthly Magazine.

SIR,

I AM happy that you inserted in your last number the letter of Mr. G. Cumberland, on the poverty and neglect Joseph Lancaster has endured; not only because it gives me an opportunity of informing that gentleman and the publick of an event which has not been communicated to the country, but also as it may elicit publick opinion respecting the conduct of those who have persevered in the ungenerous but important attempt to erase the name of that philanthropist from the fair monument his own industry reared, which cotemporaries admire, and posterity will venerate.

It is an excellent rule of Dr. Johnson to estimate men by the mass of character; and if Jo-

seph Lancaster were tried by that standard, it would be found, that, although his foibles and his faults are like so much alloy, yet the mass is gold, and sterling gold too.

Surely, then, in times like these, when the alarming increase of crimes calls for the best and united efforts of benevolent minds to counteract the moral plague that desolates the lower classes of society—in such times, it must be a matter of poignant regret, that, after a benefactor of his country had for months struggled with poverty and want itself, he was compelled, with the assistance of a few private friends, to leave his native country, and seek support for his family, and a sphere for his usefulness, in another quarter of the

globe. And this is the case of Joseph Lancaster: on the 25th of last June I parted with him at Gravesend, on-board the President, American ship, for New-York.

It may not be improper to inform you of a few circumstances connected with his departure, and I trust I shall not be accused of egotism, though I may frequently speak of myself. On the above day I was at Gravesend on my own business, and most accidentally heard that Lancaster was then in the town. Although I had not seen him for a considerable time, yet knowing that his delicacy was the cause of his absence from my house, I resolved if possible, to find him. Making further inquiries, I was directed to a small inn where I was informed he lodged: when I was asked for him, a respectable young man told me with evident confusion, "he thought Mr. Lancaster was gone out;" but seeing his *broad hat* on the chair, I told the youth he might confide in me, and if he would take my name to his master, I was sure he would immediately see me. The poor fugitive soon made his appearance, and, as he advanced towards me, I was struck with his dejected and neglected and altered mein. He took me by the hand, and with great surprise and joy inquired how I had found him out? And, when I related how very unexpectedly it occurred, he said, and tears glistened in his eyes, "Well, this cheers me, a merciful Providence has not forsaken me, and has sent thee to sweeten my parting from my dear old father and my native shore."

He then told me his place of destination; that the youth I had seen, together with his wife and daughter, were to accompany him; and that his distress was aggravated by the unhappy state of Mrs. Lancaster's intellect, for, though she had but recently returned from a celebrated asylum as much improved, yet she was, indeed, as disordered as ever, and rather worse; and, when we met at the dinner-table, her incoherence and great loquacity soon convinced me, of the melancholy fact. After we had taken wine, which *his* finances could not procure, I accompanied his lovely little girl to purchase a few articles of which she was destitute; and I cannot but regret that the liberal intentions of those friends who had kindly provided his outfit were not better executed by the gentleman who acted as their agent on that occasion. For, indeed, so scanty were his supplies, and so uncomfortable the birth which had been engaged for him on-board, that this noble-spirited man was compelled to expostulate with tears—saying, "he was ready to bear any hardship himself, but could not think of having his wife and delicate child deprived of those comforts which were essential to their health, and perhaps their existence."

This, I am happy to say, produced a change in the previous arrangement for this amiable family; who were to have gone in the steerage with the lowest company, and destitute of the smallest comforts; but were now advanced to the rank of cabin passengers.

The time having arrived for

their departure, I accompanied my friend with his family on-board, and continued with him until the vessel was under weigh; and we were compelled to part, I presume, forever. He took leave of me with more than his usual affection of manner; and, after mutual expressions of regard, he said, (and his feelings almost choked his utterance,)—"I am conscious of errors; but, after all that has been said against me, the publick are my debtors, and I am now leaving the shores of an ungrateful country, and forever."

Thus, Sir, the man who stood forth the solitary champion of universal education, and maintained the ground he took, though denounced from the pulpit and assailed from the press, has been compelled, after a splendid ca-

reer of usefulness, to forsake his native country, and seek an asylum in a rival state. Though this may prove agreeable to the few who have made his friendship the "stepping-stone" to public favour, and then abandoned him in the hour of adversity, yet every generous Englishman will lament it as another stain to our national character.

But, dishonourable as it is to us, it will extend his usefulness, and increase his fame, and the children of America will now learn to associate his name with those of Washington and Franklin, whilst we teach ours to class him with Howard and Bennett, the ornaments of their country and the benefactors of mankind.

JOHN BLACKBURN.

Minorities, Sept. 17, 1818.

SINGULAR ANECDOTE.

From Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.

THE Maleverers of Maleverer had long inhabited a very ancient and extensive mansion, in a remote western county; the estate round it was considerable, and the estimation in which the members of the family were held throughout the surrounding country, was not less the result of their great local influence, than of their ancient descent. There were those who said that Avenel de Malever had accompanied Robert, Earl of Montaigne, the uterine brother of the conqueror, in his invasion of England, and had, in consequence, received a share of the plunder and confiscations lavished on that greedy nobleman. The Battle Abbey-

roll, in which is to be found the name of Malevere, affords considerable confirmation of such an opinion. Be this as it may, the genealogical tree was a lofty one, and its roots were planted in very high antiquity.

Living almost entirely within their own demesne, this family had preserved much of the solemn grandeur which had attended their forefathers in the zenith of their glory; and as they found few, in more modern times, willing to concede the respect they exacted, they had gradually withdrawn from all general society, and confined themselves solely to the intercourse which was occasionally held with their numerous

tenantry. This resolution, too, was strengthened by the variance of religious opinion between them, and the great majority of their neighbours, since the Maleverers of Maleverer prided themselves on still preserving, in all their rigour, the doctrines of the church of Rome.

In the early part of the 19th century, the last remaining scion of this venerable stock began to droop, and as the estate was, by virtue of an old entail, to go to a distant and protestant successor, the present owner felt little interest in, or attachment to, an individual, of whom he knew nothing which he considered to be favourable, and whom he looked on as little better than an intruder on the rights of his name. Without therefore having had any communication or intercourse with this neglected branch, Hugh Maleverer of Maleverer was gathered to his ancestors in the month of October, 18—, in the full profession of the Catholick faith, having, by his last will, bequeathed away from his successor all which it was in his power to alienate.

In compliance with the directions contained in this will, the magnificent but tarnished household furniture, nearly coeval with the embattled mansion itself, was sold immediately on his decease; and when the new tenant, an amiable and respectable country gentleman, arrived from his usual residence, in a distant part of the kingdom, to take possession of his newly acquired estates, he found scarcely a bed in his own house which he could call his own.

The day following his entry into the manor place, the gray-head-

ed steward attended his summons, and appeared with all the musty deeds and age-stained parchments, which for centuries had been employed to secure and chronicle the various changes and arrangements made by the house of Maleverer. The investigation of them had occupied the greater part of the day, and night was fast waning, when the new possessor of this extended property, discovered that there was still much to be pored over and examined, in the pile of deeds, which had been hitherto unexplained to him. As, however, the eyes of his venerable companion began occasionally to close, and as the frequent yawn betrayed the old man's fatigue, Mr. Maleverer at length told him to retire to bed, saying, that his own faculties were still untired, and that he foresaw much in the heaps around him to occupy his attention for some hours longer.

Thus left to himself, Mr. Maleverer employed several hours in perusing the evidences of the noble property to which he had become entitled, and it was only as morning approached, that his attention began to flag, and his mind to wander occasionally from the important papers before him. In one of the short intervals occasioned by this abstraction, his eye unconsciously rested on a mark in one of the high pannels of black Norway wainscoat surrounding him, which bore some resemblance to a key-hole; having more than once noticed this, Mr. M. at length rose from his seat to examine the object more accurately, and found, on a closer inspection, that his conjecture was correct. He then endeavoured to discover

if the pannel in which the hole was cut was moveable; but as it resisted all pressure, he would have ceased to trouble himself further, but that the singularity of the circumstance excited his curiosity, from a belief that something extraordinary must have been intended, and which the opening of the pannel would disclose. Under this impression, he began to look for a key which might fit the aperture; and, after considerable search, discovered an old fashioned rusty key, on the edge of a narrow ledge, in the wainscot, some feet above his head; this he anxiously seized, and on its application to the key-hole, found that it was fitted to it; but owing to the rust which embrowned it, he was long apprehensive that all his efforts to open this mysterious pannel, would be vain. By dint, however, of perseverance, he ultimately succeeded in turning back the wards, and pushing open a door, formed so nicely in the pannels of the wainscoat, as to elude observation, save from the shape of the key-hole; he found himself in a small but lofty apartment, dimly lighted from a narrow window, situated very high in the wall, through which the full rays of a waning moon feebly entered. He had scarcely cast a hasty glance around the room, before he was startled by the appearance of a figure in a sitting posture, in a remote part of the apartment, seemingly deeply engaged in reading, but without any light, save that afforded by the sickly beams of the moon. The entry of Mr. M. appeared to produce no effect on this extraordinary being, although Mr. M. himself, albeit a man of

courage and resolution, felt both yielding to a sensation of indescribable alarm, at beholding a figure so occupied, at such a time, and in such a situation.

A few moments, however, sufficed to rally his senses, and after a little reflection, he determined boldly to examine the object which had produced so strong a feeling of surprise, nay, apprehension. He therefore returned into the room in which he had been sitting, and hastily catching up the light, again approached the closet; on thus a second time entering it, he had neither wish nor opportunity more closely to examine its furniture or situation, being solely occupied with the determination to unfold the mystery which was before him. The stranger still sat in the same spot, apparently intent on his book, with one arm resting on the table beside him; Mr. M. therefore advanced towards him, and as the light glanced more strongly on the figure, he was enabled to discern regular, and rather handsome features with a profusion of light hair; the gentleman, for such he seemed, appeared to be cloathed in the English fashion, but of a date rather remote; his coat too was decorated with a brilliant but partly tarnished star, a circumstance which alone would have produced considerable surprise, but which was much heightened by Mr. M.'s remarking, that although he had advanced several steps into the room, and consequently must have made some noise in his approach, the figure still appeared not to heed him. In the confusion of ideas produced by the singularity of his situation, Mr. M. at length began to

apprehend that the motionless figure before him, must be an inhabitant of another world; a conjecture to which the hour of the night, the silent solemnity of the scene, and the strange mode in which he had become acquainted with the mystery, all seemed to give colour; and without waiting to analyse his feelings, or examine more minutely into appearances so alarming, he rushed without further hesitation, from the closet; and having hastily closed again the pannel, and put the key into his pocket, retired to a sleepless bed to brood over the strangeness of the occurrence.

The waking reflections of Mr. M. were, however, insufficient to suggest any solution of the circumstances which he had witnessed; and as soon as the dawn afforded sufficient light, he hastened to the large bow-window, in his sleeping-room, which afforded a view of the now leafless trees around the mansion, in hopes that light and air would dispel the feverish dreams of imagination. The gloom, however, of a late November's morning, afforded no relief to his mind; the venerable oaks in the park, deprived of their leaves, and the wide spreading ocean beyond them, only served to increase the solemnity of his thoughts; and as soon as his servant was stirring, he despatched him to summon the old steward to his presence, in hopes, that, from him, some solution of the mysterious circumstances of the preceding night might be elicited.

After detailing the particulars, he demanded of the old man if any tale of horror was connected with the mansion, or if he could, in any shape, account for

the apparition he had witnessed. The steward hesitated at first to reply; but, at length, shaking his gray locks, he, with a sly smile, informed his master that he believed he could account for the apparition.—“This, Sir,” said he “realises, or rather accounts for, a suspicion which many of us have had respecting that room and its inhabitant. It is not a human being whom you saw last night, but——” “Why pause thus?” said Mr. Maleverer, “I adjure you to relieve my apprehensions!” “Be it so,” replied the steward. “That inmate of the eastern closet, which caused you such alarm, is, in fact, a waxen image of the unfortunate adventurer Charles Edward Stuart.” He then went on to state a report which had been general at the time of the rebellion, in the year 1745; and which he, as a boy, had often heard; that the ill-fated Chevalier had taken refuge, and been concealed in the manor house, until he was enabled to escape from his pursuers.

This report could have had no other foundation than the existence of this waxen prototype, which had been procured by the then owner of the estate, who being a rigid catholic, and of Jacobite principles, had naturally taken an interest in the Prince's misfortunes, and had caused this figure to be formed out of compliment to his hapless master. It had afterwards been neglected and forgotten, and the tradition only of its existence remained, since the room in which it was contained had for many years been carefully closed. The old steward attributed the recent discovery of the figure to the sale (amongst the other furniture of

the mansion) of an enormous mirror, which, having been nailed away to the wainscot for half a century, had concealed alike the key and key-hole; so that no aperture being visible, the very recollection of the room, had, in the course of so long a period, died away.

A cool and dispassionate investigation, by day light, of the closet, and its unknown inhabitant, satisfactorily corroborated the old man's solution of the mystery.

SELF IMMOLATION.

From the Literary Panorama.

[The following extract from a letter written by Mrs. T. Newton at Calcutta, contains an account of Self-Immolation, by a female on the funeral pile of her husband; a melancholy evidence of the existence of this horrid custom, at the present moment; but the last, we hope, we shall have to record.]

Calcutta, June 18, 1818.

YESTERDAY morning, at seven o'clock, this woman was brought in a palanquin to the place of sacrifice. It is on the banks of the Ganges, only two miles from Calcutta. Her husband had been previously brought to the river to expire. His disorder was hydrophobia. He had now been dead twenty-four hours, and no person could prevail on the wife to save herself. She had three children, whom she committed to the care of her mother. A woman, called to be undertaker, was preparing the pile. It was composed of bamboo, fire-wood, oils, rosin, and a kind of flax, altogether very combustible. It was elevated above the ground, I should say, twenty inches, and supported by strong stakes. The dead body was lying on a rude couch, very near, covered with a white cloth. The oldest child, a boy of seven years, who was to light the pile, was standing near the corpse. The woman sat perfectly unmoved during all the preparation, apparently at prayer, and counting a string of beads which she held in her hand. She was just thirty years old; her husband twenty-seven years older. Police officers were stationed to prevent any thing like compulsion, and to secure the woman at the last moment, if she should desire it. The corpse was now placed on the ground, in an upright posture, and clean linen crossed round the head and about the waist. Holy water was thrown over it by the child, and afterwards oils by the Brahmins. It was then placed upon the pile upon the left side. The woman now left the palanquin, walked into the river, supported by her brothers, who were agitated, and required more support than herself. She was divested of all her ornaments; her hair hanging dishevelled about her face, which expressed perfect resignation. Her forehead and feet were stained with a deep red. She bathed in the river, and drank a little water, which was the only nourishment she received after her husband's death. An oath was administered by the attending brahmins, which is

done by putting the hand in holy water, and repeating from the Shaster a few lines. This oath was given seven times. I forgot to say the child received an oath before the corpse was removed. The brothers also prayed over the body, and sprinkled themselves with consecrated water. She then adjusted her own dress, which consisted of long clothes wrapped round her form, and partly upon her head, but not so as to conceal her face. She had in her hand a little box, containing parting gifts, which she presented to her brothers and to the Brahmins with the greatest composure. Red strings were then fastened round her wrists—her child now put a little rice in her mouth, which was the last thing she received. She raised her eyes to heaven several times during the river ceremonies, which occupied ten or twenty minutes. She took no notice of her child, having taken leave of her female friends and children early in the morning. A little cup of consecrated rice was placed by the child at the head of the corpse. She now walked to the pile, and bent with lowly reverence over the feet of her husband; then, unaided, she passed three times around the pile. She now seemed excited by enthusiasm; some said of a religious nature; others by affection for the dead. I do not pretend to say what motive actuated her, but she stepped upon the pile with apparent delight, unassisted by any one, and threw herself by the side of the body, clasping his neck with her arm. The corpse was in a most horrid putrid state. She put her face close to his; a cord was slightly passed over both; light faggots and straw, with some combustible rosin, were then put on the pile, and a strong bamboo pole confined the whole: all this was done by her brothers. The child then applied the fire to the head of the pile which was to consume both parents.—The whole was instantly on fire. The multitude shouted; but not a groan was heard from the pile. She undoubtedly died without one struggle. Her feet and arms were not confined; and after the straw and faggots were burnt, we saw them in the same position she had placed them. This was a voluntary act. She was resigned, self-collected, and perfectly herself."

SKETCHES OF
SCOTTISH SCENERY AND MANNERS.

From the Edinburgh Magazine, for Nov. 1818.

DESCRIPTION OF A PENNY WEDDING.

Mr. Editor,

IN my last, I promised you the pleasure of witnessing a country penny-wedding, but, upon reflecting that this would occupy

nearly a week, I have taken it for granted that you will accept of a plain and faithful narrative from one who has "mingled in the mirthful throng," participating in their pleasures and follies; in the heyday of youth laughing with

them, and now, in the wane of settled, and a definitive treaty life, contenting himself with al- soon takes place, which is easily ternately smiling and sighing at ratified, as there is no dowry to the recollection. be stipulated, nor jointure to be

There is, perhaps, no action of fixed ; neither of the parties has their lives in which the prince and therefore, a *sine qua non* to insist the peasant are more dissimilar, upon, the terms being, in general, than in their different modes of the *uti possidetis*. When courtship ; and it must be admitted, that on the score of prudence, the house is furnished, and the "lassie's providing" ready, no farther delay takes place, unless it should so happen that the month of May intervene, which, among the vulgar, is reckoned ominous to marriage, or may rather be considered as obliterated from the calendar of Hymen. One is not a little surprised to find this genial month, otherwise so much the delight of all ranks, and a favourite theme for rural poets, reckoned so unpropitious to love. Of this *freit* I have never been able to trace the origin to many inquiries for the reason, the general answer was, "because it is unlucky ;" but my respondents were unable to give a *why* or a *wherefore*. The best account I could ever obtain, was from the old woman mentioned in my first letter, and whose name was Lizzie***** (I mention this, because there may be occasion for referring to her authority in future.)

Most commonly the match is finally arranged between the parties before the parents know any thing of the matter, except what they may have suspected from the stolen glances and "gloamin whispers" of the fond innamoratas, who meet often in secret, the one to declare, and the other to hear, the ten times told, but still delightful tale ; for the dignity of the sex must not be compromised by a too early consent. In due time, a formal communication is made by the lover to the girl's father, preliminaries are

Among Lizzie's remarkable stories, she told of a couple, whose eagerness to run their necks into the matrimonial noose, would not allow the unlucky month of May to pass over ; the bride's mother, with tears in her eyes, begged of her not to take so rash and unprecedented a step ; she remonstrated with the bridegroom ; and finding all her eloquence ineffectual, concluded by telling them, that she had now done her duty, and the conse-

quences must be upon their and the result was, as Lizzie
own heads. Opposition in this said, they did that rashly which
se, as in many others, only they rued at leisure.
ndered both more obstinate, (*To be continued in our next.*)

VARIETIES.

From the New Monthly Magazine, for December, 1818.

THE SUPPOSED ORIGIN OF TASSO'S JERUSALEM DELIVERED.

IN the publick library at Ly-
ons there is a quarto manu-
script poem of nearly thirty thou-
and verses, entitled "Godefroi
de Bouillon," written in the year
1440. From what I saw of the
work I cannot divest my mind of
the idea that it afforded matter
for, and suggested the plan of
Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered,"
it is a succinct narrative of the
first Crusade.

The following anecdote of
Godfrey de Bulloign, as Fairfax
calls him, is curious, and, I be-
lieve, not generally known.—
When this great champion of the
crusades was inaugurated king
of Jerusalem, he was offered a
crown, which he meekly declin-
ed, saying, that he would never
wear a crown of gold in the
place where his Saviour had
worn a crown of thorns.

COINCIDENCE BETWEEN LORD BYRON AND OTHER WRITERS.

Menage quotes the following
lines from Vida's Art of Poetry,
to justify the occasional similari-
ties of two authors when touching
upon the same subject:—

Spice ut exuvias veterumque insignia
nobis
optemus; verum accipimus nunc clara
reperta;
anc seriem atque animum verborum
quoque ipsa,
et pudet interdum alterius nos ore lo-
cutos.

St. Jerome relates that his pre-
ceptor, Donatus, explaining that
sensible passage of Terence—
"Nihil est dictum quod non sit
dictum prius,"—railed severely
at the ancients for taking from
him his best thoughts—"Pereant
qui ante nos, nostra dixerunt."

The following coincidences of
Lord Byron are not noticed with
any invidious intention, but
merely as curious and accidental
resemblances, which to the lite-
rary reader may not prove una-
musing. In his exquisite stan-
zas to Thyrza, Lord Byron has
the following thought:

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe
The smile that sorrow fain would wear,
But mocks the wo that lurks beneath
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Poem xiv s. 3.

In some verses by Mrs. Opie,
the same idea occurs, though it
is expressed with much less spi-
rit and pathos:—

A face of smiles, a heart of tears!
Thus in the church-yard realm of death
The turf increasing verdure wears,
While all is pale and dead beneath.
Opie's Poem v. 1. p. 38.

Some stanzas for musick, al-
so, by Lord Byron, introduce a
modification of the same thought;
for instance—

'Tis but as ivy leaves around the ruined
turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but
worn and grey beneath.
Stanzas for Musick.

But these, however, are in He only, like the ocean-weed upturn,
in precisely the same train of And loose along the world of waters
thought as the following:— borne,
Was cast companionless, from wave to
wave,

And oft we see gay ivy's wreath
The tree with brilliant bloom o'er-
spread,

When, part its leaves and gaze beneath,
We find the hidden tree is dead.

Opie's Poems, v. 2, p. 144.

The delightful stanzas next
quoted, is, perhaps, the most
truly poetical passage of all his
lordship's productions. It is in
the very loftiest tone of enthusi-
asm and tenderness.

And could oblivion set my soul
From all its trouble visions free,
I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
That drown'd a single thought of thee!

Poem xxii. s. 3.

"Lines written in Autumn,"
by Logan, contained a similar
allusion:

Nor will I court Lethæan streams
My sorrowing sense to steep,
Nor drink oblivion to the themes
O'er which I love to weep.

The comparison which occurs
in the second stanzas of the third
Canto of *Childe Harold* has been
much admired:

———— I am as a weed
Flung from the rock on Ocean's foam to
sail,
Where'er the surge may sweep, the
tempest's breath prevail.

Lord Byron.

Mr. Montgomery concludes
his beautiful description of his
hero, in "The World before the
Flood," in a similar manner.
By the by, the personal charac-
ter of Lord Byron, to those who
are really acquainted with him,
and who have not formed their
notions of him from mere hear-
say, will appear strongly to re-
semble that of Javan.

On Life's rough sea—and there was none
to save.

World before the Flood, p. 24.

In a beautiful song commenc-
ing with "Maid of Athens ere
we part," which was addressed
to Miss Macrea, the daughter of
the late British Consul at Athens,
Lord Byron says—

Tho' I fly to Istambol
Athens holds my heart and soul.

Dodsley has the same thought,
without a similar delicacy in his
embellishments of it.

Though my body must remove,
All my soul shall still be here.

The following coincidences
have the appearance of being en-
tirely accidental:

And more thy buried love endears,
Than aught, except its living years.

Lord Byron, Poem xvi.

Would not change my buried love
For any heart of living mould

Campbell.

They mourn, but smile at length, and
smiling mourn:

The tree will wither long before its fall;
The hull drives on, tho' mast and sail be
torn,

The roof tree sinks, but moulders on
the hall.

In massy hoariness, the ruined wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements
are gone,

The bars survive the captive they en-
thral:

The day drags through, tho' storms keep
out the sun,

And thus the heart will break, and bro-
kenly live on.

Childe Harold, Canto iii. v. 32.

Thou shalt be kept alive in misery;
A tree doth live long after rottenness
Hath eat away its heart; the sap of life

Moves through its withered rind, and it
lives on,
Mid the green woods a rueful spectacle
Of mockery and decay.
Wilson's City of the Plague, p. 27.

In addressing Italy, Lord Byron says,

Thy very weeds are beautiful.
Childe Harold, Canto 4.

Speaking of Rome, Isabel observes, in the "City of the Plague,"

The very weeds how lovely!—p. 77.

IMPOSITION OF THE LATIN FATHERS AT JERUSALEM.

IT is singular that the Latin Fathers resident at Jerusalem pretend, with the utmost assurance and precision, to point out to travellers the tower of David, his sepulchre, the sepulchre of our Saviour, the houses of Zebedee, St. Mark, St. Thomas, and Caiaphas; although Palestine has several times changed its masters, and so frequently been wasted and destroyed. It is recorded of Titus, that according to Christ's express prediction, he ordered his soldiers entirely to demolish its structures, fortifications, palaces, towers, walls, and ornaments. So eager were they in executing his commands, that they left nothing which could even serve to indicate that the ground had once been inhabited, except a part of the western wall, the three towers of Hippicos, Phasaël, and Mariamne; which the conqueror left standing: the former to serve as a rampart to his twelfth legion which he left there, and the three latter, to denote to future ages the strength of the whole city, and the valour and skill of him who overthrew it. The Jewish traditions report

that Titus caused the plough to be driven over it, a strong presumption that its destruction was every way complete.—Under such circumstances then, it is not easy to believe the statements of the Fathers, as to the holy places before alluded to; for though the site of them may in some measure be imagined, yet it is extravagant to suppose that the fabrics themselves are still in existence.

THE PASSIONS.

Tacitus calls the Passions "torments," because under their influence the words that a man utters are for the most part sincere.—Persius in his 5th Satire, says,

"Intus et in jecore ægro
Nascuntur domini."
Our Passions play the tyrant in our breasts.

CONVIVIALITY.

It was said by the ancients, that to enjoy the "feast of reason, and the flow of soul," the party should never be more than the Muses or less than the Graces. The "deliciæ amantium," must surely then have been either unknown or unfashionable, for what two lovers in an agreeable tete-a-tete would be anxious for an augmentation of their number?

DIFFIDENCE IN CONVERSATION ACCOUNTED FOR.

That excessive diffidence, that insurmountable shyness, which is so apt to freeze the current of conversation in England, has been very correctly accounted for by Cowper, who says,

"Our sensibilities are so acute,
The fear of being silent makes us mute."

Memory is an inestimable gift: "Tantum ingenti quantum memoriæ," say Quintilian, I have

nevertheless heard persons boast of having bad memories, because Helvetius has observed, somewhere in his Essay on Man, that a tenacious memory, by forcing too many ideas upon the imagination, prevents it from determining upon any given point."—— What an absurd hypothesis! Does not memory assist the mind, by furnishing parallels by which we are enabled to decide upon existing circumstances? The affirmation of Helvetius puts me in mind of the Fox who wanted to persuade his species that *tails* were unfashionable, because he had happened to lose his own in effecting his escape from a trap.

COWPER'S TRANSLATION.

Though Cowper in his translation of Homer has been too literal, and inattentive to the melody of his versification, he has infused much more of the simple majesty of the divine Bard than his predecessor Pope, who appears to have wielded the sword of Alexander throughout, and to have *cut*, rather than *unravelled* the GORDIAN knots to be met with in his original.

HOPE.

Though Hope is a flatterer, she is the most uninterested of all parasites, for she visits the poor man's hut, as well as the palace of his superior.

NOTE TO GRAY'S ELEGY IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.

It is probable that the following fine delineation of domestick affection may have suggested to Gray a passage in his Elegy.

At jam non domus accipiet te læta, ne-
que uxor
Optima, nec dulces occurrent oscula nati
Prærepere, et tacita pectus dulcedine
tangent.

Lucretius, L. III. 907.

For them no more the blazing hearth
shall burn,
Nor busy housewife ply her evening
care,
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to
share.

Gray's Elegy.

So COLLINS in his ODE on the
"SUPERSTITIONS of the HIGH-
LANDS."

"For him in vain his anxious wife shall
wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his
way;
For him in vain at to-fall of the day,
His babes shall linger at the unclosing
gate,
Ah! ne'er shall he return."

A similar passage occurs in Thomson's Winter describing the traveller lost in the snow;

"In vain for him the officious wife pre-
pares
The fire fair blazing, and the vestment
warm;
In vain his little children peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their
sire,
With tears of artless innocence; alas!
Nor wife, nor children more shall he be-
hold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home!"

POPE.

Would not the following
couplet from Pope's Essay on
Criticism, make a valuable addi-
tion to a collection of English
Bulls?

When first young Maro in his boundless
mind
A work to outlast immortal Rome design-
ed.